

SEPARATING FACT FROM FICTION

Fiction

The MDTA Toll Facilities have been paid for.

Fact

The MDTA's highways and unique bridges and tunnels continue to require an investment of millions of dollars each year to operate, maintain and rehabilitate the facilities—they are never really “paid for.” As anyone who owns a home knows, the initial cost of building the house is only the beginning. There are ongoing additional costs to operate and maintain it through the years. Eventually, much needs to be replaced or renovated, usually at a higher cost than the initial purchase price. Roads, tunnels and bridges are no different, except they're on a much larger and expensive scale.

Fiction

The toll increase is only needed to pay for the Intercounty Connector (ICC).

Fact

There are three primary reasons driving the need for additional toll revenues. Hundreds of millions of dollars are required to maintain and rehabilitate the MDTA's network of aging bridges, tunnels and turnpikes. The \$225 million in planned repairs over the next six years for the Bay Bridge is just one example. In addition to these substantial rehabilitation needs, two major new capacity improvements are under construction that must be financed. These include the Express Toll Lanes project on I-95 in the Baltimore region and the Intercounty Connector in the Washington region. Funding the ICC is not the sole reason for this proposed increase in tolls.

Fiction

Toll revenue is shared with the State's Transportation Trust Fund and General Fund and with local and other State agencies.

Fact

The MDTA relies solely on toll revenue to operate and maintain its facilities. Every toll dollar collected goes right back into MDTA's bridges, tunnels and turnpikes. The MDTA does NOT provide money to any other state agency for transportation projects. Nor does it receive any money from the State's Transportation Trust Fund or the General Fund to operate its facilities. In addition, MDTA does not receive any federal funding.

Fiction

The Bay Bridge is a “cash cow” for MDTA.

Fact

The Bay Bridge base toll is cheaper today than the day it opened in 1952. At that time, motorists paid \$2.80 round trip plus \$.25 a passenger. The Bay Bridge generally is able to cover its direct expenses, for example in fiscal years 2007 through 2010 the Bay Bridge made \$1.2 million.

